Amendments to the Claims

1   Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of assessing information technology ("IT") products

2   for their target market, comprising steps of:

3   determining a plurality of criteria that are important to a target market, and at least one

4   attribute to be used for measuring each of the criteria;

5   specifying objective measurements for each of the attributes; and

6   conducting an evaluation of an IT product, further comprising steps of:

7   inspecting a representation of the IT product, with reference to selected ones of

8   the attributes;

9   assigning attribute values to the selected attributes, according to how the IT

10   product compares to the specified objective measurements;

11   generating an assessment score, for the IT product, from the assigned attribute

12   values; and

13   generating a list of recommended actions, the list having an entry for each of the

14   selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below a threshold, each of the

15   entries providing at least one suggestion for improving the assigned attribute value <u>and a</u>

16   <u>specification of how much the assessment score would be increased if the assigned attribute</u>

17   <u>value was raised to the threshold.</u>

1   Claim 2 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the list of recommended actions

2   is generated automatically, responsive to the assigned attribute values that fall below the

3   threshold.

1   Claim 3 (original): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

2   prioritizing each of the attributes in view of its importance to the target market;

3   assigning weights to the attributes according to the prioritizations; and

4   using the weights when generating the assessment score.

1   Claim 4 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the assessment score is

2   programmatically generated.

1   Claim 5 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the step of conducting an

2   evaluation is repeated at a plurality of plan checkpoints used in developing the IT product.

1   Claim 6 (original): The method according to Claim 5, wherein successful completion of each of

2   the plan checkpoints requires the assessment score to exceed a predetermined threshold.

1   Claim 7 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein a product team developing the IT

2   product provides input for the evaluation by answering questions on a questionnaire that reflects

3   the attributes.

1   Claim 8 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the assigned attribute values, the

2   assessment score, and the list of recommended actions are recorded in a workbook.

1   Claim 9 (original): The method according to Claim 8, wherein the workbook is an electronic

2   workbook.

1   Claim 10 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein a product team developing the

2   IT product provides input for the evaluation by answering questions on a questionnaire that

3   reflects the attributes, and wherein the answers to the questions, the assigned attribute values,

4   the assessment score, and the list of recommended actions are recorded in an electronic

5   workbook.

1   Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the steps

2   of providing the assigned attribute values, the assessment score, [[and]] the list of recommended

3   actions, and the specification of how much the assessment score would be increased to a

4   product team developing the IT product.

1   Claim 12 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 8, further comprising the step of

2   providing the assessment workbook, following the evaluation, to [[the]] a product development

3   team which is developing the IT product.

1   Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of

2   assigning a special designation to the IT product if and only if the assessment score exceeds a

3   predefined threshold.[[.]]

1   Claim 14 (currently amended): A method of assessing an information technology ("IT")

2   product, comprising steps of:

3   determining a plurality of criteria for measuring an IT product, and at least one attribute

4   that may be used for measuring each of the criteria;

5   specifying objective measurements for each of the attributes; and

6   conducting an evaluation of the IT product, further comprising steps of:

7   inspecting a representation of the IT product, with reference to selected ones of

8   the attributes;

9   assigning attribute values to the selected attributes, according to how the IT

10   product compares to the specified objective measurements; and

11   generating an assessment score, for the IT product, from the assigned attribute

12   values, and for each of the selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below a

13   predetermined threshold, a specification of how much the assessment score would be increased

14   if the assigned attribute value was raised to the threshold.

1   Claim 15 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 14, wherein the step of

2   conducting the evaluation further comprising step of comprises generating a list of

3   recommended actions for improving the IT product.

1   Claim 16 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 15, wherein the list has an entry

2   for each of the selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below [[a]] the

3   predetermined threshold.

1   Claim 17 (original): The method according to Claim 16, wherein each of the entries provides at

2   least one suggestion for improving the assigned attribute value.

1   Claim 18 (original): The method according to Claim 14, wherein the specified objective

2   measurements further comprise textual descriptions to be used in the step of assigning attribute

3   values.

1   Claim 19 (original): The method according to Claim 18, wherein the textual descriptions

2   identify guidelines for assigning the attribute values using a multi-point scale.

1   Claim 20 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 14, further comprising the step

2   of [[used]] using the generated assessment score to determine whether the IT product may exit a

3   plan checkpoint.

1   Claim 21 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 14, further comprising the step

2   of [[used]] using the generated assessment score to determine whether the IT product receives a

3   special designation indicating its support of the measurement criteria.

Claims 22 - 23 (canceled)

1   Claim 24 (currently amended): A method of assessing information technology ("IT") products

2   for their target market, comprising steps of:

3   conducting an evaluation of an IT product, further comprising the steps of:

4   inspecting a representation of the IT product, with reference to selected ones of a

5   plurality of attributes, wherein the attributes are defined to measure a plurality of criteria that are

6   important to the target market; and

7   assigning attribute values to the selected attributes, according to how the IT

8   product compares to objective measurements which have been specified for each of the

9   attributes;

10   recording results of conducting the evaluation; and

11   using the recorded results to generate an assessment score[[,]] for the IT product[[,]]

12   from the assigned attribute values, wherein the generated assessment score thereby indicates

13   how well the product meets the criteria that are important to the target market, and for each of

14   the selected attributes for which the assigned attribute value falls below a predetermined

15   threshold, a specification of how much the assessment score would be increased if the assigned

16   attribute value was raised to the threshold.

1   Claim 25 (original): The method according to Claim 24, further comprising the step of charging

2   a fee for carrying out one or more of the conducting, recording, and using steps.